

Geopolitical Alignments in South Asia: Assessing the India–Israel–Afghanistan Axis and Great Power Influence on Pakistan’s Security

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ABSTRACT

The geopolitical setting of the South Asian region is changing significantly. An unofficial Israel-India-Afghanistan axis is forming, based on intelligence sharing, hybrid warfare methods, and similar strategic goals. This alignment presents significant hazards to Pakistan's domestic stability, especially in areas such as Balochistan, and endangers the safety of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This article examines the development, strategic incentives, and consequences of this nexus from 2020 to 2025. The research uses government comments, policy studies, media stories, and materials from security think tanks to look at how this axis wants to destabilize Pakistan, limit China's influence, and change the situation in Afghanistan. It also looks at how Pakistan is responding in several ways, such as diplomatically, strategically, and financially, as well as how China and the United States are involved in this changing geopolitical battle. Lastly, it gives policy recommendations for Pakistan, as well as its allies, and other people in the region on how to deal with and minimize these new hybrid risks.

Introduction

Background of Regional Geopolitics

During the past few years the geopolitical setting of the South Asian region has become very intricate. In recent years, South Asia’s geopolitical landscape has become increasingly complex. Cross-border conflicts are not the sole causes of conflicts. Hybrid techniques, such as proxy wars, intelligence sharing, and surveillance operations, are now an important component of competitiveness in the area. Strategic thinkers in Pakistan state that one of the most vital things that has occurred in this situation is the appearance of an illegitimate India–Israel–Afghanistan alliance, which wishes to weaken Pakistan's safety and tactical endeavors (Islamabad Policy Institute, 2025).

Israel and India have collaborated closely on security, intelligence, and surveillance equipment since the establishment of this illicit relationship. From India's point of view, Israel has superior technologies for the military and the ability to share surveillance data.

At the same time, Israel attains tactical depth by working together with a nearby nation that is combating the same enemies. Afghanistan, in particular since Taliban came back to power, has become a place where various interests come together: India's political and economic involvement in Kabul and its tactical exploitation of Afghan land may give them an advantage in efforts to undermine Pakistan (The

Dawn, 2021).

This vicious coalition poses a multilayered danger for Pakistan. It may intimidate internal strength, target its tactically important framework, and put its local affiliations to the test. China's stance as the closest ally of Pakistan adds to this hazard. Experts think that China's ambition to attain continental expansion through financial initiatives are the cause of synchronized attacks from Israel-India-Afghanistan nexus.

Purpose and Scope of the Study

This study seeks to elucidate the structure, goals, and ramifications of the trilateral alliance from the perspective of Pakistan's defense landscape. The emphasis is particularly on the years 2020 to 2025, which are marked by increased geopolitical tensions, including cross-border wars, political unrest in Afghanistan, intensified uprisings in Pakistan, and increasing rivalry among major powers.

The analysis focuses on the working of the alliance across a number of areas—security, military, and informational—as it observes Pakistan's reaction. The study also investigates this transformation in the larger picture of China-Pakistan collaboration, US political policy, and the balance of power in the locality.

Historical Context of the India–Israel–Afghanistan Axis

Evolution of India–Israel Relations

Israel and India officially established political and diplomatic ties in 1992, but the strategic relations between these two states were established several decades ago. The cooperation between these countries has strengthened considerably with the passage of time, predominantly in the domains of intelligence, defense and surveillance (IPI, 2025). Israel has helped India in cyber security, signal intelligence and drone technology and modernization of India's security forces. This collaboration is a matter of concern for Pakistan, as Pakistan considers this nexus a potential threat to its territorial integrity and tactical assets.

Post-2001 Afghanistan and Shifting Alignments

In 2001, the US attack on Afghanistan transformed Afghanistan into a critical area. This situation urged India to establish developmental and diplomatic ties with Afghanistan, making heavy investments in various domains such as health, education and infrastructure development (Wikipedia, n.d.). The Strategic Partnership Agreement between Afghanistan and India signed in 2011, enhanced collaboration between these two countries in areas like reconstruction, capacity building and security. (Wikipedia, 2025).

After the US's departure, India changed its strategy towards Afghanistan. As India has not yet officially recognized Taliban government, it has reopened an unofficial diplomatic mission in Afghanistan. By maintaining presence in Afghanistan, India has become a potential threat not only to the regional security, but also to Pakistan's growth and well-being.

Growth of Informal Strategic Coordination

During past few years, scholars indicated the mounting cooperation among Israel, India and Afghanistan through informal channels (IPI, 2025). This collaboration is not just limited to diplomatic involvement; it also comprises secret intelligence exchange, narrative maneuvers, and support for proxies. An important tool used by this nexus is narrative building and information warfare. Pakistani experts think that the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) based in Washington has initiated a Balochistan Studies Project. This project provides separatist voices a stage and makes Baloch separatist voices louder (The Tribune, 2025). Analysts say that such projects demonstrate a strategic intention in triggering internal turbulence in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

Anti-Pakistan Orientations in the Nexus

Islamabad perceives this new alliance as having an unwavering anti-Pakistan plan. People think that Indian intelligence agencies, particularly RAW, provides funds and backing to rebellious groups like the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) from Afghanistan (Pakistan Today, 2025). From Pakistan's perspective, the major objective behind these activities is to make Pakistan's borders vulnerable, hinder China's advancement by blocking the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and make it difficult for Pakistan to govern disputed areas. This nexus also intends to weaken Pakistan's claim to certain areas by manipulating separatist ideas. It adds a soft-power component to its strategy by supporting diaspora leaders and think-tank ventures. This is a hybrid model, blending information, violence and volatility.

Contemporary Developments (2020–2025)

Cross-Border Hostilities and Hybrid Conflict

Current reports indicate that rebel activities, strategic incitements and cross-border terrorist activities have increased during the past few years. Pakistan perceives that India and Israel are using Afghan land to wage hybrid war in Pakistan (Dawn, 2021). Pakistani officials also assert that Indian intelligence agency (RAW) is backing the TTP and Baloch separatists work in collaboration. The Balochistan provincial minister states that RAW supports a TTP–BLA alliance with the objective of disrupting CPEC, attacking Chinese workforces, spreading disorder, and weakening Pakistan's autonomy (Times of India, 2025).

Information Warfare: Narratives and Disinformation

The hybrid combat spans further than the field of information. Security experts declare that Israel and India exploit information warfare as a tactical instrument. The Khyber Chronicles declares that the Israel-India association uses propaganda and media manipulation to spread untruthful narratives, like linking Pakistan to terrorist groups, thereby undermining its governance (Khyber Chronicles, 2025).

Strategic Use of Afghan Territory

Afghanistan possesses a central position for the operations of this alliance. Experts think that India-Afghan Alliance serves two purposes i.e. using Afghan terrain for

proxy combat and retaining a base to launch terrorist maneuvers against Pakistan (Policy-Wire, 2025). Reports indicate that these efforts comprise using equipped crowds on Afghan territory that share the same goals as those who intend to damage Pakistan.

These operations comprise the use of militant groups based in Afghanistan that are ideologically united with anti-Pakistan goals. It is also asserted that Baloch separatist leaders use Afghan territory to collaborate with Indian intelligence and rebellious groups. This collaboration is a matter of concern for Pakistan, as Afghan territory is being used to destabilize the country.

Separatist Mobilization and Think-Tank Initiatives

The MEMRI's Balochistan Studies Project is one of the most evident signs of this alignment. This project was launched in June 2025 and has been portrayed in Pakistan as a tactical move to make separatist claims more valid and give Baloch separatists a bigger voice across the globe (Tribune, 2025; South Asia Times, 2025). The forerunner of this initiative, "Mir Yar Baloch," declared Baluchistan's independence on social media. Several people in Pakistan considered this as a politically driven move, possibly backed by foreign elements (Times of Islamabad, 2025).

Strategic Objectives of the Nexus

Destabilizing Pakistan's Internal Security

The major objective of Israel-India-Afghanistan nexus is destabilize Pakistan. By backing terrorist networks, this nexus strives to harm Pakistan, deteriorate its governmental control, and weaken it economically and politically (Pakistan Today, 2025). Intelligence-sharing and proxy uprising strategies may destabilize Pakistan's security and tactical projects.

Undermining CPEC

CPEC is supposed to play a vital role in the economy, trade and prosperity of Pakistan. Pakistani sources assert that the alliance may be attempting to disrupt CPEC in both physical and non-physical ways, such as assisting terrorist attacks, spreading pro-independence narratives, and using untruthful information to make global investors less confident (IPI, 2025; Pakistan Today, 2025). If CPEC is disrupted, it will harm Pakistan's economy and its tactical affiliation with China.

Limiting China's Influence in South Asia

From Islamabad's perspective, the alliance also tries to contain China's rising power. The axis puts pressure on Beijing's most essential regional ally by making Pakistan less stable. Experts argue that this is part of a greater Israeli-Indian strategy to halt Chinese funds and infrastructure development in the region (Policy Wire, 2025).

Regional Power Projection via Afghanistan

Afghanistan functions as a bridge as well as a launching pad for anti-Pakistan activities. India and Israel can use Kabul to exhibit power, finance proxies, and keep networks going that intimidate Pakistan's safety. This, increases Israel's tactical influence into South Asian region, which helps to attain its higher geopolitical

objectives. Thus, the coalition paves the way for external powers to create problems for Pakistan indirectly instead of engaging in a conflict with it directly.

Pakistan's Strategic Response

Diplomatic Engagement and Narrative Countermeasures

Pakistan has reacted to this apparent hazard by disseminating a narrative of being a victim of such terrorist activities. Officials have frequently spoken out against external influence, particularly from India, and have attracted attention to hybrid concerns on the international stage (The News, 2021). Islamabad has worked more closely with China, concentrating on working in collaboration with Afghanistan to safeguard the CPEC projects and ascertain stability (Policy-Wire, 2025).

Military and Counterterrorism Operations

Pakistan has intensified its fight against terrorism on the military front. The continuance of **Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad** reveals Pakistan's determination to destroy terrorist network, particularly in border areas (Wikipedia, 2025). These activities, along with proper intelligence sharing and harmonization of inner security, demonstrate that Pakistan does not depend only on diplomacy; it also uses power when required to cope with hybrid intimidations.

Strengthening CPEC Resilience

Pakistan is increasing the security of CPEC-related assets by recruiting more security workforces, keeping an eye on intelligence, and engaging the community. The major target of these terrorists is economic infrastructure of Pakistan. But the government of Pakistan is committed to expand the CPEC projects as a measure to enhance regional connectivity. (Policy analysis). Pakistan intends to make uprising less attractive to local people and terminate aid for separatist narratives by integrating development and security.

Leadership and Strategic Messaging

The civil and military administrations of Pakistan have played a vital role making the threat noticeable. Pakistani top officials, including the President and security services, have said that the changing axis is not only a security problem but also a hazard to national autonomy and integrity (MOIB, 2021). This message is intended to unite the people of Pakistan and let external forces know that Pakistan would not bear intervention.

Role of China and the Great Power Context

China-Pakistan Strategic Partnership

China continues to be a major strategic ally of Pakistan. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is more than just a commercial project; it is a vital link for geopolitics (Small, 2015). As Islamabad deals with multifaceted challenges, Beijing's help in terms of defense, money and politics is very significant.

Protecting Infrastructure and Strategic Interests

Because of the likely challenges to CPEC from external enemies, China has great interest in safeguarding the corridor's security. Pakistan gets both validity and deterrence from Chinese funding and political backing. Additionally, if Pakistan and Afghanistan reach a peace agreement and resolve their issues regarding terrorism and extremism, it can strengthen the project, making it more lucrative for the region.

Strategic Balancing Against India

The Israel–India–Afghanistan coalition is another combat zone in China's geopolitical tussle with India. China can balance out India's increasing power and regional connections by operating closely with Pakistan. This position fits with China's longstanding plan to safeguard its investments in the Belt and Road Initiative and keep its western side safe.

Long-Term Vision for South Asia

China wants South Asia to be connected, economically interdependent and stable. Beijing wishes to establish a buffer zone and reinforce its power in the region by facilitating Pakistan and encouraging collaboration among regional states. This idea goes against India and Israel's struggles to limit China's power in indirect ways.

The United States: A Complex Actor

U.S.–India Defense Cooperation

The United States has reinforced its security relations with India because it sees India an essential ally in the combat against China. This collaboration increases India's tactical capabilities, such as in cyber, intelligence, and innovative weapons. This cooperation can ultimately make it easier for India to exhibit power in the region (strategic commentary).

U.S. Ties with Pakistan

Concurrently, US keeps practical relations with Pakistan because it is vital for regional security and for its engagements in Afghanistan. This dual commitment makes US policy vague: even though the US supports India's rise, it is however careful about entirely enfeebling Pakistan's strength. Pakistan's tactical designs are made more challenging by the fact that the US is playing a double game in this conflict.

Information and Norms

From an ethical perspective, the United States has not provided all-inclusive support for vigorous global laws against both hybrid warfare as well as proxy intervention. Pakistan might ask for more obvious global norms at places like the UN and the OIC, but the USA's lack of clarity on these problems makes it less possible that international pressure will stay steady.

Geopolitical Risk and Opportunity

The United States offers both significant trials and useful opportunities for Pakistan. Though US's affiliation with India is becoming resilient, Pakistan can still work in

collaboration with the US in several domains such as regional connectivity, counterterrorism, and new threats to security. The chief objective is to utilize this affiliation logically while keeping the strength and tactical importance of its relationship with China.

Implications for Pakistan and the Region

Internal Stability

The Israel–India–Afghanistan association has already inflicted heavy injuries to Pakistan, costing human lives, capitals, and trade. Pakistan may become even more vulnerable if this alliance gets resilient. The blend of externally sponsored violence, ideological uprising, and digital warfare might make the borders less stable and put a lot of pressure on the nation's security and systems of government.

Economic Risks and CPEC Vulnerability

CPEC is a game changer for the future of Pakistan's economy, but it is likely to be affected by hybrid interruption, recurrent terrorist attacks, the killing of Chinese workers, and narratives of independence. Investors becoming suspicious can disrupt the development ambitions, harm local inhabitants, and make longstanding stability less possible.

Regional Power Realignment

If Israel, India, and Afghanistan all work together, it may transform the balance of power in the region. This coalition may make Pakistan isolated, making it more reliant on China. This kind of shift may affect how different states in the area, like Asian countries, Iran, Central Asian nations and the Gulf States cope with these new divisions.

Broader Muslim World Reactions

Israel's indirect influence in a Muslim state may worsen broader geographical and spiritual anxieties. Pakistan may use its negotiating power in the Islamic world, especially through the OIC, to highlight the problem around the world. Pakistan can raise global awareness and get more political backing by portraying it as foreign involvement in a Muslim country's territorial integrity.

Risk of Hybrid Conflict Escalation

This alliance's hybrid nature—using media campaigns, proxies, surveillance collaboration, and terrorist activities—makes it possible that there will be a long-standing, small-scale combat. It is difficult to handle this kind of battle because it affects the military, cyber, and social realms all at once. Therefore, Pakistan should be ready to cope with long-lasting foreign intervention and challenges.

Policy Recommendations

For Pakistan

To detect and counter hybrid risks, Pakistan should develop effective system for inter-agency collaboration.

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To crush separatist propaganda, strengthen pro-state narratives, Pakistan ought to establish tactical communication expertise.

Pakistan must commit to a comprehensive security structure that comprises surveillance, public participation, and local growth to make CPEC projects more resilient.

Pakistan should Increase multi-layered and trilateral collaboration with China and Afghanistan and use diplomatic paths to highlight hybrid dangers.

For China

China should offer both practical and financial aid to guard CPEC facilities, specifically in areas that are potentially hazardous.

To create a mutual monetary concern and diminish the insurgents' influence, it is advisable to encourage the enlargement of CPEC into Afghanistan.

To counter harmful external impact, China needs to make intelligence-sharing agreements with Pakistan.

For Regional and International Actors

To deal with hybrid perils, an effective security framework should be established that comprises Pakistan, China, Afghanistan, and other concerned parties.

There is an acute need to urge India to engage in discussions with Pakistan, taking actions against proxy warfare and intelligence sharing.

Infrastructure development initiatives and connectivity should be linked to peace and security in the region, making sure that economic assimilation strengthens stability.

For Global Powers (Including the U.S.)

The global powers ought to work through multidimensional organizations to develop international standards to counter proxy funding and information warfare.

The international powers must retain a balanced liaison with both Pakistan and India, making sure that aid, diplomacy and collaboration do not worsen the hybrid conflict.

They should urge all the parties involved for openness in surveillance and stop hidden actions that make the entire area less secure.

Conclusion

The imagined India–Israel–Afghanistan triangle signifies a profound strategic partnership intended to transform the defensive structure of South Asia. This partnership is a complex, varied threat to Pakistan's sovereignty and the strength of its tactical facilities, particularly the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It uses surveillance sharing, proxy channels, and propaganda combat to accomplish such goals.

Pakistan's reaction comprises aggressive force, diplomatic efforts, and alternative narratives, all of which are based on its tactical alliance with China. But because danger is always changing, we need to stay alert, work together, and get connected with other countries. As rivalry between the major nations grows, South Asia might become a battlefield for hybrid conflicts. Pakistan's plan for staying alive relies not just on its military might but also on its ability to build perseverance, get allies to join it, and create a regional framework that protects its territorial integrity.

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